

Reminiscences of Minnesota politics /

REMINISCENCES OF MINNESOTA POLITICS.*

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I arrived in Minnesota in July, 1866, having left my old home at Quincy, Ill., on account of lung trouble contracted during my army service. I had always been interested in politics as a Republican. In May, 1864, I was a delegate to the Republican State Convention at Springfield, Ill., which sent delegates to the National Convention to re-nominate Abraham Lincoln as President. In that convention I wore my uniform as a captain of Illinois volunteers, having just recruited a company for my second term of service. This convention also nominated Richard J. Oglesby for governor of Illinois and a full state ticket. Returning from my army service in the fall of 1864, I made speeches in favor of Lincoln's election and cast my first presidential vote in November, for the great Emancipator.

I was thus, on coming to Minnesota, somewhat prepared to take an interest in political affairs. This tendency was stimulated by the fact that I brought with me letters of introduction to William R. Marshall, then governor, from his old friends in Quincy, where he had spent his boyhood years. Governor Marshall received me most kindly, and thus within a week after my arrival in St. Paul began the acquaintance which lasted during his entire life with constantly increasing respect on my part for his commanding abilities, sterling integrity, and amiable character.

I spent the fall and winter of 1866–7 at Anoka, and attended there in October my first political meeting in the state, which was addressed by General C. C. Andrews, then just returned from his prolonged and honorable army service. I was not yet a voter, but, had I

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been, should undoubtedly have voted for 554 Ignatius Donnelly at what proved to be his last election as representative in Congress.

1867.

On January 1, 1867, at the invitation of Granville S. Pease, then and now its proprietor, I assumed the editorship of the Anoka Union, a relation which continued for five years, although I only remained for a few months a resident of Anoka. In this capacity I helped organize the Minnesota State Editorial Association at St. Paul in February, 1867. There I met practically all the newspaper men of the state, only fifty or sixty in number at that time, and formed associations, many of which have lasted until now.

In April, 1867, I removed to St. Cloud, Minn., where I remained one year. Soon after my arrival I became involved, at the village caucus, in a political contest in behalf of my friend, Governor Marshall. He was a candidate for re-nomination and was opposed by the so-called Donnelly element of the party, then specially represented in St. Cloud by L. W. Collins, afterward justice of the Supreme Court, C. D. Kerr, afterward judge of our St. Paul District Court, and W. B. Mitchell, then and long afterward editor of the St. Cloud Journal. Governor Marshall's interests were represented by J. E. West, T. C. McClure, and others, and my belligerent disposition carried me into a wordy debate with Captain Collins, which afforded us material for some amusement in after years. Marshall was defeated at St. Cloud, but was victorious in the State Convention and was easily elected in November.

The state constitutional amendment granting equal suffrage was voted upon at that election, and was an issue in the campaign. I made some speeches in the northern part of the state, especially devoted to that issue, and some others in Stearns county in the interest of C. A. Gilman, candidate for state senator, pledged to the re-election of Alexander Ramsey, United States senator, which would occur during Mr. Gilman's official term. Gilman was elected, although Stearns county was strongly Democratic, and I thus gladly contributed somewhat to the election of Senator Ramsey for his second term.

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During this canvass I heard, for the first time, Cushman K. Davis deliver, or attempt to deliver, a political speech. It 555 was at the court house in St. Cloud where Captain Davis, as he was then known, occupied the platform with Sam Beeman, a well known political orator from southern Minnesota. Beeman was a fluent and vigorous speaker, with a tremendous voice, and a remarkable gift of "continuance." He spoke for more than two hours, greatly interesting the audience, and when he closed two-thirds of those present left the hall. This was embarrassing for Captain Davis, who bravely started in, however, in a modest way, with a shrill voice to rehearse a carefully prepared speech. Within five minutes half of the people who had remained disappeared. Davis saw that he must be brief and tried to jump to the conclusion of his speech, but failed to land at the right place. He became covered with confusion, stammered and repeated himself, but finally struck his peroration and wound up what was admittedly a complete failure. Contrasting this episode with the wonderful success Senator Davis afterward achieved as an orator in many widely divergent fields, one must arrive at the conclusion that, in some cases at least, orators are made and not born. On my speaking with him many years afterward, when multiplied successes had made it safe to allude to this early failure, Senator Davis told me that he had other discouragements nearly as bad in his early career. During this same campaign he spoke at Lake City, where things passed off smoothly, as he thought, and he expected a glowing compliment in the local paper. Getting hold of the next issue he was astonished to see that the only allusion to his speech was couched in language something like this: "A young man named Davis also spoke. In our opinion this handsome young man would be more effective in addressing an audience of one with his arm around it."

1868.

I removed to St. Paul in April, 1868, and established my permanent residence which has since remained here. This was the year of the celebrated contest for the Republican nomination to Congress between Ignatius Donnelly, the then incumbent, on one side, and W. D. Washburn, General L. F. Hubbard, and General C. C. Andrews, on the other

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side. I had formed the favorable acquaintance of General Andrews during my year at St. Cloud, and had accumulated a growing political distrust of Mr. Donnelly. Consequently I opposed Donnelly's renomination in my editorials in the Anoka Union and I went to the district convention as a proxy delegate from Ottertail county (the first time that county had been represented in any convention) in the interest of General Andrews. Donnelly bolted the convention and was nominated by his friends with a pretext of regularity. In the anti-Donnelly convention, Washburn withdrew and General Hubbard was nominated. A little later, however, having been put in a false position as to a matter of arbitrating the differences by some of his campaign managers, General Hubbard resigned the nomination. The convention was re-assembled and General Andrews became the final nominee and made the campaign. The Democrats nominated E. M. Wilson of Minneapolis, who was elected in November, as the opposing Republican candidates divided the overwhelming party vote of the district. There were then only two Congressional districts in the state, and this district embraced everything north of Wabasha county.

The fight within the party was bitter and unrelenting. I made many speeches, winding up the night before election at St. Cloud, where I occupied the platform with Governor Marshall, and whence we sent to Mr. Wheelock's St. Paul Press, which ardently supported Andrews, the cheering intelligence that the prairies of northern Minnesota were on fire with enthusiasm for our favorite. The returns a few days later showed that he came out third in the race.

1869.

In January, 1869, occurred the second election of Alexander Ramsey as United States senator, which was full of surprises, criminations, recriminations, stratagems and strategies. I was an interested observer, being heartily in favor of our distinguished senator, but not sufficiently on the inside to know as to the truth or falsity of many of the serious allegations made in connection with the affair. Ramsey's following then, as later, while embracing unquestionably a very large section of the party, was controlled and

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manipulated by a select coterie of shrewd politicians, embracing Federal office holders and wealthy contractors in St. Paul and elsewhere, who had grown 557 rich from post traderships and furnishing army supplies, Indian goods, etc.

While Ramsey was thus successful in his re-election, the methods of his supporters had become somewhat unpopular and the nomination of Horace Austin for governor later in the year was distinctly an anti-Ramsey movement. Donnelly came serenely to the front as a candidate for governor against Austin in the Republican convention, and McKusick of Stillwater was another candidate, but Austin received a majority of the delegates. He had lukewarm support at the polls, however, from the dominating element of the party, and was elected by an uncomfortably small majority over George L. Otis, the Democratic candidate.

1870.

General John T. Averill of St. Paul, a popular and able man, whom it was always a delight to honor, was the Republican nominee for Congress in 1870, and again Donnelly appeared, this time as an independent candidate with Democratic support. He announced that he would run solely on the platform of "Ignatius Donnelly." The Democrats made no nomination, and mostly voted for him, but Averill was elected. The St. Paul Pioneer, then the state organ of the Democracy, was noncommittal and gave Donnelly little or no assistance. I happened to be present when General H. H. Sibley made a persuasive and almost pathetic effort to induce H. L. Carver, then the proprietor of the Pioneer, to support Donnelly in his paper. Carver said he would do so whenever the Democrats endorsed Donnelly, but as they failed to do this formally he was never called upon to fulfill his promise.

Mark H. Dunnell, who had for several years been State Superintendent of Public Instruction, was elected to Congress as a Republican from the First District this year, and began his notable career of fourteen years' conspicuously able and useful public service.

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In 1870 I was appointed by Governor Austin a member of the State Board of Trustees of Soldiers' Orphans, and held the position by successive appointments for ten years or until the close of the institution. There was no salary attached to the 558 office. Among my colleagues Col. H. G. Hicks and Maj. O. B. Gould were specially prominent.

1871.

The state convention of 1871 re-nominated Governor Austin with little or no opposition. Mr. Donnelly came back into the fold, making a characteristic speech at the convention, in which he stated that he found the platform of "Ignatius Donnelly," on which he had run for Congress the year before, was altogether too narrow. He pledged himself to support the ticket this year and be a good Republican forever after. But the next year he was to be seen shouting in the front ranks for Horace Greeley, Democratic candidate for President, and during the remainder of his long life he was found, as a rule, active in the opposition.

One episode of this convention is significant as the first entry of C. K. Davis as a candidate in state conventions. F. R. E. Cornell, of Minneapolis, was attorney general and had no opposition for re-nomination. At the noon recess of the convention Captain A. H. Reed of Glencoe came to me and suggested that we go to Cush. Davis and ask him to be a candidate for attorney general as a representative of the Union soldier element. I willingly consented, though I doubted the success of our mission as Mr. Davis was then United State district attorney, which I regarded as an equally important and more lucrative position. To my astonishment, however, Captain Davis, without a moment's hesitation consented to run, showed much eagerness for success, and authorized us to get tickets printed and muster all his friends to his support. The time was too short, during the few hours that intervened before the nomination was reached in regular order, to secure enough votes to defeat Cornell. But the episode is interesting as indicating Mr. Davis' laudable ambition to get before the people, and as the beginning of a moulding of political events in his interest, which during the remainder of his life commanded my active support.

1872.

In 1872 General John T. Averill was re-elected to Congress from the St. Paul district, and Mark H. Dunnell from the First district. There was now, for the first time, an election for a 559 third Congressman, and H. B. Strait of Shakopee was elected, thus inaugurating a total service of fourteen fruitful years in the House of Representatives,—losing one intermediate term, 1879–81.

General Grant was renominated for President, and the St. Paul Republicans organized a Grant and Wilson club, embracing the entire city, which was a strong and energetic organization, doing very efficient work throughout the campaign. I had the honor to be unanimously elected president of this club, with Frank Fairchild as secretary, W. D. Cornish vice-president, and H. R. Brill, now our esteemed senior judge of the District Court, treasurer. At the November election, St. Paul went Republican on the national ticket for the first time.

In October I was nominated as a Republican candidate for the Legislature in the Fifth ward of St. Paul, embracing the territory now covered by the First, Second and Third wards. I was elected in November over James Smith, Jr., an old citizen and prominent lawyer, the Democratic candidate, after a spirited contest.

1873.

In January, 1873, began my service in the Legislature, which then met annually and was limited to a term of sixty days. It was, in some respects, the most notable session which the state had then seen. It was specially notable for the large number of members, who then were, or afterward became, distinguished in public life.

In the Senate were W. H. Yale, lieutenant governor, S. S. Beeman, Milo White, W. G. Ward, L. F. Hubbard, J. L. McDonald, D. M. Sabin, Edmund Rice, J. S. Pillsbury,

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C. H. Graves, R. B. Langdon, L. L. Baxter, Henry Poehler, and others almost equally distinguished.

In the House were A. R. Hall, speaker, George P. Wilson, T. S. Van Dyke, S. P. Child, W. C. Williston, E. W. Durant, George Benz, L. Fletcher, C. H. Clarke, A. Barto, F. E. Du Toit, E. St. Julian Cox, Stephen Miller, J. V. Brower, J. W. Blake, and others.

Of these men, two, Hubbard and Pillsbury, were afterward governors, and one, Stephen Miller, had already been governor; D. M. Sabin became United States senator; White, McDonald, 560 Rice, Poehler, and Fletcher, became Congressmen; Baxter, Williston, Cox, and McDonald, became district judges; and several others occupied prominent positions in the political and business life of the commonwealth.

One unofficial episode of the session was an intense excitement created by the refusal of the Merchants Hotel to entertain the colored orator, Frederick Douglass, who came to St. Paul to deliver a lecture. "Deacon" W. L. Wilson solved the problem by taking Mr. Douglass to his home, but an indignant legislator introduced a resolution removing the capital from St. Paul on account of this insult to the colored race. The resolution went over under notice of debate and did not afterward materialize. Later in the session, Mr. George Benz and myself, the only two Republican members of the House from Ramsey county, secured an appropriation of \$10,000 to extend the old Territorial capitol, then in use by the State, after an effort nearly equal to that required in 1893 to begin the construction of our present capitol, costing nearly \$5,000,000.

A notable official episode of the session was the impeachment of William Seeger, state treasurer. I voted against the articles of impeachment, and have never had occasion to regret my action. They were overwhelmingly carried, but Mr. Seeger resigned and the Senate proceedings which subsequently ensued were nugatory.

The year 1873 witnessed the nomination of Cushman K. Davis for governor, an event of intense and lasting interest in itself, with many far reaching influences on the politics of the

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state. My own relations to this movement were somewhat intimate. It was the beginning of my separation from many of those with whom I had worked harmoniously within the party for several years. Hon. W. D. Washburn, of Minneapolis, was the choice announced for governor by the Republican influences which had dominated from the beginning of the state government,—the so-called Ramsey dynasty. Ramsey county was expected to go for Washburn; St. Paul had no candidate; Governor Austin was, in some quarters, talked of for a third term; and Augustus Armstrong, of Rochester, was put forward by that part of southern Minnesota. The St. Paul Dispatch, then an avowed Democratic paper, conducted by H. P. Hall, had, in 561 a spirit of supposed mischievous interference in Republican plans, frequently suggested the name of C. K. Davis for governor, but little attention was paid to it by Republicans in the absence of any indication that Davis desired the nomination.

One Saturday afternoon in Rice Park, H. R. Brill, then probate judge and active in politics, asked me if I thought Davis could be nominated. I replied that I had no knowledge that he desired the nomination. Brill said, "Let's find out, and, if he does, we can carry this county for him." The same day I received a letter from S. P. Child of Faribault county, asking me if Davis was a candidate. The next Monday I went to Davis' law office to find out. At the door I met W. L. Wilson, who was going on the same errand. We asked the question, and, without giving us a direct reply, Davis inquired what we thought about it. We told him that a good deal depended on Governor Austin's attitude. If he were a candidate, it would divide the anti-Washburn strength and there would be little hope; if he were not, we believed the experiment was worth trying, especially if we could get some assurances of a few leading St. Paul men of their active help. Mr. Wilson and myself agreed to make some inquiries and meet in the afternoon at Davis' office to report. Mr. Wilson saw D. W. Ingersoll, General J. B. Sanborn, and some other leading men, who said that they would support Davis. I went to the capitol to see Governor Austin. He was absent, but his private secretary, A. R. McGill, afterward governor, promptly assured me that Austin was not a candidate, was perfectly willing to retire, and that he, McGill, would gladly see Mr. Davis

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enter the field. I then went to former Governor W. R. Marshall, my mentor and friend, and was surprised to find him ready to embark heartily in the Davis movement. He had always been, and still was, a "Ramsey" man, but he said he would fight Ramsey's battles when Ramsey was a candidate; we would not sacrifice so good a man as Davis on the mere suspicion that his promotion might sometime in the future injure Ramsey. This was a manly and independent position to take, as was eminently characteristic of Marshall; but few of the other leading Ramsey men followed his example,—we had them all to fight. 36
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Mr. Wilson met me at Davis' law office in the afternoon as agreed, and we made our encouraging report. Mr. Davis promptly decided to formally announce his candidacy, and taking from his desk a letter from Liberty Hall of Glencoe which inquired as to his position, he wrote a brief reply stating that he would be a candidate and would be grateful for the support of his Republican friends.

In order to secure immediate publicity, it was decided that I should take copies of these letters to the St. Paul Press, the Republican organ, and ask their insertion. The Press was outspoken for Washburn, but it was hoped that its editor, Mr. J. A. Wheelock, would print the correspondence as a matter of news.

I wrestled vigorously with Mr. Wheelock for two hours that evening. He did not refuse to print the letters, but labored hard to secure a reconsideration of the decision. He foresaw numerous political complications that would result, whether the movement was successful or otherwise, and urged me strongly to go back to Davis and induce him to change his mind,—but I told him the decision was final. Next day the letters appeared at the head of the editorial column, but were, as was expected, accompanied by vehemently adverse comment. That interview was the parting of the ways between Mr. Wheelock and myself, the beginning of a political estrangement that lasted twenty years.

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The Davis men organized the city of St. Paul, and carried it at the primaries, winning in four of the five wards, and also in the country towns, and sending from the county convention a strong delegation for Davis.

Meantime a vigorous correspondence was carried on throughout the state, the time being very short, and the work for Washburn having been quite thoroughly done. The men largely relied on in the different counties to come down to the state convention in Davis' interest were Republican members of the last legislature and Republican editors of county newspapers. We had no money to pay the traveling expenses of delegates, but all these men had railroad passes, and then, as afterward in emergencies, proved a valuable resource to draw upon when their services were needed. The editors, especially, were a practically solid phalanx behind Davis during all his political career.

Personally I visited a few counties, including Goodhue county. There I met General Hubbard, who, as soon as he was assured that Davis had an earnest following, went to work energetically in his own and other counties. General Hubbard had a vivid recollection of some injustice done him five years before by the influences that were now supporting Washburn; this, added to his sincere personal admiration for Davis, made him an enthusiastic and effective supporter. Gen. John B. Sanborn, always zealous, unselfish and faithful, was another tower of strength in this and future battles.

When the state convention assembled, it was found that, in spite of Governor Austin's announced declination, a good many county conventions had instructed their delegates to support him. Many of these delegates were now anxious to vote for Austin, unless he formally absolved them. Austin seemed afraid that Davis could not beat Washburn and hesitated to positively decline. In fact, he stated that, if nominated, he would be obliged to accept. This, in effect, made him a candidate and threw cold water on the Davis enthusiasm. If, on the first ballot, Austin should show more votes than Davis, our forces would be expected to go to him. At Davis' request I went to Governor Austin early in the morning of the day of the convention and frankly stated our position. I told him that Davis

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never would have gone into the race had not Secretary McGill positively assured me that he, Austin, was not a candidate; that now things had so shaped themselves that Austin's candidacy would be bitterly resented by the earnest friends of Davis, and that in this state of feeling Washburn would win the nomination. I asked Austin to write a letter to the convention, explicitly stating that he was not in the usual sense of the term a candidate, and had not been; that no delegates were there at his request, and that he would be satisfied to have either of the candidates, aside from himself, receive the nomination. He promptly agreed to write the letter and at once did so, sending one copy to General Hubbard, representing 564 Davis, and another to Levi Butler, representing Washburn, and the letter was read to the convention. This letter accomplished the object of releasing some Austin men to Davis, so that on the first ballot Davis and Austin each received 77 votes; and thereafter Davis constantly gained, while Austin steadily lost. Years afterward I was told by one of Austin's friends that most of them considered he made a great mistake in writing that letter, and that they blamed me for suggesting it to him. But I have always considered it a manly and proper thing for Governor Austin to do,—furthermore, that but for this letter Washburn would have been nominated, many Davis men preferring him to Austin under the circumstances.

The convention met July 16, 1873, and in the preliminary skirmish the Washburn forces seemed to have a victory over the combined opposition in the election of William H. Yale of Winona as temporary chairman by a decisive majority, but subsequent events failed to justify this promise. The final ballot gave Davis 155 and Washburn 152 votes, thus by a narrow margin nominating our candidate and changing the entire political history of the state. Many interesting and exciting episodes occurred during the convention. A disputed ballot for Davis was found under the lining of General Sanborn's hat, used as a ballot box, and was counted, no doubt properly; if it had not been counted, Davis would still have had a majority. The excitement over the result was almost painful in its intensity. Davis appeared on the platform and made, as would be expected, a splendid acceptance speech.

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A very influential personage in the Washburn ranks at this time, and in the ranks of the Ramsey element at all times, was General R. N. McLaren of St. Paul, United States marshal. He was an intelligent, systematic and tireless worker against us, and had many admirable qualities and was as generous and honorable an opponent as one ever meets in political warfare. One of his good qualities was a graceful, manly acceptance of defeat. He knew when his side was whipped. General McLaren came to me on the floor of the convention as soon as the result was known and said: "You must be chairman of the Republican State Committee; you have earned it; Davis' 565 friends are entitled to it in making his campaign, and I will try to see that you get it." I had no desire for the position with its responsibilities, and I told him I would not be appointed, as I knew the dominating influences of the convention operating through Chairman Yale too well to believe that this concession would be made. I was correct in my judgment. C. H. Pettit of Minneapolis was made chairman of the committee; it had little interest in Davis or the ticket; it raised a considerable campaign fund, but spent very little, turning over about three-quarters of it to the committee for the ensuing campaign. Davis made speeches throughout the state, and was everywhere received with enthusiasm. The people were with him, but the machine was against him. It was desired that his majority should be small. Ara Barton was the Democratic nominee, and Davis' majority was something like 6,000, as against three times that number for Grant as President the preceding year.

One thing which dampened the enthusiasm of the Ramsey Republicans who had opposed Davis, was the fact that his enthusiastic young friends, immediately after his nomination, raised the cry of "Davis for Senator in 1875." Davis himself looked with favor on this proposition, but was doubtful about the expediency of mixing it up with his current gubernatorial campaign. Still, as the state senators to be elected with him in November would hold over and have a vote in the United States senatorial election in 1875, it was necessary to make at least some preliminary movements in that direction. As one of those movements, Davis requested me to become a candidate for state senator from my district in St. Paul. I was antagonized by Hon. E. F. Drake, capitalist, railroad president,

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successful in business, able and experienced in politics, who was an avowed Ramsey man. The district embraced the Fourth and Fifth wards of St. Paul and the county towns. There were twenty delegates in the district convention, and when they went into secret caucus, I had twelve of them pledged and Mr. Drake had eight. But Col. John L. Merriam was a delegate inside, and when the doors were opened it was announced that Drake had received twelve votes to Castle eight, and that 566 Drake was nominated. This was a sample of the vicissitudes of politics to which we had already become accustomed and of which we were all to learn more later on.

1874.

Cushman K. Davis was inaugurated governor early in January, 1874. Shortly before his inauguration I was requested by Adjutant General Mark D. Flower, who like myself had been one of his ardent supporters, to go with him and ask Davis to appoint A. R. McGill as his private secretary,—McGill having served four years in that capacity for Governor Austin with distinguished ability. Governor-elect Davis promptly told us that he had already decided to appoint “Deacon” Wilford L. Wilson to that position. This was an unthought of thing to both of us, but I promptly recognized its wisdom and emphatically endorsed it. Davis was then under thirty-five years of age and had the reputation of being, to draw it gently, a little “wild,” which reputation was very largely undeserved, but which made it especially appropriate that the antechamber of his official home should be occupied by a man twenty years older than himself, of the highest character for purity of morals and dignity of bearing as well as sincere religious faith and practice. Mr. Wilson's appointment was at once a guarantee of correct politics and dignified administration.

Senator Hoar of Massachusetts, in his eloquent memorial address after the death of Senator Davis, used this language: “He met every occasion with a simple and quiet courtesy. There was not much of deference in it; there was no yielding or supplication or timidity in it.” The aged and dignified Massachusetts senator, accustomed for years to deference from everybody, showed in this phrase a tinge of disappointment that he

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had never received such from this stalwart young colleague out of the west. I never saw Governor Davis show much deference to people in all his career, but must make an exception in the case of Mr. Wilson. He showed him unquestioned deference and respect from the beginning.

When it was discovered that Davis could not make McGill his private secretary, Governor Austin, in the last days of his administration, appointed McGill insurance commissioner, in 567 the place of Pennock Pusey who resigned for that purpose. Davis was not consulted about this and resented it as an infringement on his prerogative. He was naturally sensitive and somewhat suspicious; and though he then admired McGill, and years afterward learned to trust him implicitly, to lean on him unreservedly and to confide his highest interests to his keeping, he was dissatisfied with this procedure. As a means of checkmating it, if found advisable, Davis went before a notary public and signed an oath of office immediately after the Legislature had canvassed the vote, and two days before the public inauguration. He thus became legal governor, and the appointment of McGill, which was promptly sent in by Governor Austin, was of no validity. The Senate held up the appointment until after the inauguration; but a few days later Davis personally requested the senators to confirm it, and from that time forward he was one of McGill's warmest friends. The fact of his taking the oath of office in advance was probably never known to more than three persons, and is only narrated now as an unwritten incident of politics which throws a side light on the relations and motives of the parties interested.

Soon after his inauguration, Governor Davis became an avowed candidate for United States senator to succeed Alexander Ramsey at the election to be held in the winter of 1875. W. D. Washburn and Horace Austin also entered the field as candidates, and the autumn of 1874 was largely devoted by their friends to securing the nomination of candidates for the Legislature in their interest. It was the field against Ramsey, and the three gubernatorial rivals in 1873 were now allies. In Ramsey county the conflict raged with great bitterness. Horace Thompson, president of the First National Bank, secured a nomination for the Legislature in the fifth ward, and though after his nomination he

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recognized Davis sentiment in St. Paul to the extent of pledging himself to vote for Davis for senator, enough Republicans in the fifth ward had become alienated to join with the Democrats and elect F. R. Delano as their representative,—although Flower, McCardy, T. S. White, myself, and many other Davis men, vigorously supported Mr. Thompson, relying on his promise which, no doubt, would have been fulfilled and might have been decisive in Davis' favor.

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This year W. S. King of Minneapolis was nominated for Congressman; he was bitterly opposed by the St. Paul Press, under the management of Mr. Wheelock, who lavished his choicest morsels of invective in voicing his hostility. The people were warned against “The strumpet of corruption which strides in naked horror through the land,” and were told how deeply they would be disgraced if King were allowed to succeed. He was nominated, however, and elected, but the prescience of Mr. Wheelock was apparently justified. The Pacific Mail scandal came to the surface and Mr. King spent a considerable portion of his official term in Canada, evading the service of a subpoena to appear as witness in a Congressional investigation,—on the alleged ground, believed by many to be absolutely correct, that he was thereby protecting the precious reputations of many unsullied senators and congressmen.

1875.

The winter of 1875 witnessed, during the legislative session, the memorable senatorial contest which resulted in the defeat of Alexander Ramsey and the election of S. J. R. McMillan, then Chief Justice by recent appointment of Governor Davis. The leading candidates against Ramsey were Davis, Washburn, and Austin. The machine that is, the Federal office holders and the railroad and capitalist element, carrying what we younger men called the “barrel” with them, presented a united front in favor of Ramsey. Davis was then leading candidate in opposition, and many of his sanguine friends believed he had the certainty of ultimate victory. There was no specially valid reason, as appears from

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this distant perspective, why Ramsey should have been displaced. He had served two terms in the Senate after creditable records as Territorial and State governor. But we were impatient and really thought he was too old to longer perform efficient service. The shortness of our vision and the irony of fate were vividly presented to my mind twenty-five years later, when I saw ex-Senator Ramsey, still hale and vigorous at the age of eighty, on a front seat at the funeral of Senator Davis, worn out and stricken down at the age of sixty-two.

When the legislature of 1875 assembled, active work began and the adherents of the different candidates were rounded up. 569 A secret caucus to nominate for United States senator was called for a certain evening, and the preceding night a conference of the friends of Governor Davis was held in his room at the capitol. Twenty-nine or thirty senators and representatives were personally present and each solemnly pledged himself to support the governor in the caucus. Two or three more were vouched for, so that we fully counted on a minimum of thirty-two votes. When the caucus met the next evening, Davis received twenty-one votes on the secret ballot. His real friends then saw how they had been deceived and resolved to expose the treachery. Senators L. F. Hubbard and Thomas H. Armstrong, who led the Davis forces, demanded a recess for consultation. They finally secured it and called on the Davis men to go to the governor's room. Twenty-nine men responded to the call, gathered around the governor and looked each other in the face. Senator Hubbard said, "Who of us are the traitors? The only way to find out is to abandon the caucus and appeal to the vote in the Legislature, where each man must be recorded." The result was that the caucus was adjourned and never again reassembled in force. Ramsey's adherents held what we called a "rump" caucus and nominated him. But this was not considered binding on those who did not participate, and the friends of the other candidates carried the fight into the open session of the Legislature. Here Davis received his twenty-one votes; he discovered who his true friends were, and was enabled to give a pretty good guess as to who were the traitors. After many weary days of caucusing and balloting and criminating, a compromise was effected by which all the

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other candidates were dropped and Judge McMillan, whom nobody had thought of at the beginning, least of all himself, was elected senator. He was re-elected in 1881, served creditably but not conspicuously for twelve years, and then in 1887 Davis came into his own.

One of the first acts of Senator McMillan, in the spring of 1875, was to recommend to President Grant the removal of J. A. Wheelock, editor of the Press, from the position of postmaster of St. Paul, to which he had recently been reappointed after serving four years. Frederick Driscoll, his business associate, 570 was assistant postmaster, both salaries, aggregating about \$7,000 a year, thus going to the support of the Republican organ. The President demurred, but Senator McMillan insisted, and since by long precedent the local postoffice is considered the personal perquisite of a senator, he finally had his way. Dr. David Day, his brother-in-law, received the post office which he held nearly fourteen years and administered with marked efficiency. But the iron entered the soul of the party organ. The defeat of Ramsey and the loss of the post office absolved the Press from its party fealty; having about that time consolidated with the old Democratic Pioneer, it became an independent newspaper with all that the name implies. It freely criticised Republican administrations, state and national, and for some time gave little support to party candidates, state or local. But Mr. Wheelock was too loyal a Republican, and too ardent a controversialist, to remain long in a position of neutrality. Within a year or two, the exaltation of Pillsbury in the party measurably consoled him for the occultation of Ramsey. The Pioneer Press donned its war bonnet and plunged into the midst of the fray, on the Republican side.

Governor Davis declined the re-election which he could have had for the asking in spite of some hostilities within the party, caused by the so-called "bolt" of his adherents in the Legislature. As a matter of fact, that movement never injured the political status of any who participated in it. Senator Hubbard was elected governor a few years later, and all the other friends of Davis in the Legislature had honorable political careers during the next decade. None of them was willing to give up his heritage as a Republican or surrender

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his prerogatives of local leadership. During the few years preceding, some of the ablest Republicans in the state had been driven from the party, after more or less serious defeats for nominations, etc., by the dominant faction,—among them Thomas Wilson, James Smith, Jr., Morton S. Wilkinson, Ignatius Donnelly, and William L. Banning. But the “Davis men” swallowed their defeat, justified their insurrection, and stood by their colors.

John S. Pillsbury was nominated for governor by the Republican State Convention of 1875, his opponents being Dr. J. H. Stewart, of St. Paul, and Ex-Governor Horace Austin. Pillsbury was elected in November and served six years, through three terms,—the only governor of Minnesota up to this time who has enjoyed that distinction.

During Governor's Davis' term he tendered me several official positions which I declined, as I was then practicing law in St. Paul and preferred my professional work. Finally, on November first, 1875, he offered me the position of adjutant general, which Mark D. Flower resigned, for the brief remainder of his term. As this would not interfere with my plans, the duties of the office alluded to then being somewhat nominal and the salary correspondingly low, I accepted, and held over several months under Governor Pillsbury. I then voluntarily retired and Gen. H. P. Van Cleve, one of the recognized heroes of the Civil War, succeeded me.

1876.

The year 1876 was made memorable by the Hayes and Tilden campaign for the presidency. At the convention which elected delegates to the Republican National Convention, I was made a member at large of the Republican state central committee. When the committee organized, George A. Brackett of Minneapolis was elected chairman and I was elected treasurer.

Dr. J. H. Stewart of St. Paul was nominated for Congress to succeed Col. William S. King, whose service had been neither creditable to himself nor acceptable to his constituents. The Pioneer Press was lukewarm in its support of Dr. Stewart, and the Dispatch, the only

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other daily paper in the city, was avowedly a Democratic organ. Finding that H. P. Hall, the owner of the Dispatch, was willing to sell it at a reasonable price, a movement was inaugurated in the special interest of Dr. Stewart to purchase the paper. Many leading Republicans promptly subscribed to the stock of the new concern, among them Senators Windom and McMillan, Governor Pillsbury, ex-Governor C. K. Davis, Postmaster Day, Russell Blakely, D. M. Sabin, General McLaren, General Hubbard, and others. Some of these subscribers made it a condition that I should take editorial charge of the paper, at least until after the November election, to which I consented. We took possession of the 572 Dispatch September 13, 1876, and in one day transformed it from a belligerent Democratic to an equally aggressive Republican sheet, to the great astonishment of many members of both parties who were not in the secret. The remaining six weeks of the campaign were made as lively as possible, and at the election Dr. Stewart was successful, and the State went for Hayes by a large majority.

After election there seemed to be a unanimous desire on the part of the Dispatch stockholders that I should continue as editor-in-chief of the paper, which position after deliberation I finally accepted. This terminated my professional work as a lawyer and began a career in daily journalism which I continued, except a short interval, for about nine years. The Dispatch under my direction warmly advocated the re-election of Senator Windom, and no formidable candidate appeared against him. The tremendous excitement succeeding the election, as to whether Hayes or Tilden had been chosen, is a matter of history and need not be detailed here. Suffice it to say that Minnesota had her share of the excitement and participated freely in the criminations and recriminations which were indulged in.

1877.

The first important political event of 1877 was the compromise at Washington by which the electoral commission was established to pass upon the electoral vote as between Hayes and Tilden, which resulted in the victory of Hayes by the narrowest possible margin, 8 to 7.

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When the Legislature met at St. Paul no opponent to Senator Windom appeared, nevertheless he left his important duties in Washington and came here to look after his interests. Even after the Republican caucus had unanimously endorsed him and Windom had ostensibly returned to Washington, it developed that he tarried in Winona until he had actually been elected, thus betraying a nervousness and lack of confidence in his friends or in himself which was entirely unjustifiable.

John S. Pillsbury was re-nominated and re-elected governor; the state central committee of the previous year was continued, Mr. Brackett remaining chairman and myself treasurer 573 during the years 1876 to 1878. I was furthermore secretary and treasurer of the state central committee (C. K. Davis, chairman) from 1881 to 1883, and chairman of the committee from 1884 to 1886. In 1884 our committee conducted the Blaine and Logan campaign, giving the ticket the then unprecedented Republican majority of 42,000 in this state. During all these campaigns I handled or was cognizant of all moneys collected and disbursed by the committees. It is a significant fact, in view of some heavy expenditures of campaign funds in this state during subsequent years, that the largest sum disbursed in any of these campaigns was the fund of 1884 which amounted to exactly \$850.

1878.

At the Congressional Convention of 1878, W. D. Washburn of Minneapolis defeated Congressman J. H. Stewart for the Republican nomination in this district. Ignatius Donnelly succeeded in getting the Democratic and "Granger" nomination. Then followed the celebrated "Little Brass Kettle" campaign, which created great excitement throughout the district, then embracing practically the whole of Minnesota north and west of St. Paul. Washburn was elected by over 3,000 majority, but Donnelly contested the election on the alleged technical irregularity of a few votes in Minneapolis, relying on a Democratic Congress to seat him. Donnelly came very near succeeding in this attempt, and the

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contest which was kept up during the entire two years of Washburn's term largely neutralized his influence.

I favored Stewart for the nomination, but ardently supported Washburn for the election both in the Dispatch and on the platform.

1879.

Previous to the Republican State Convention for 1879, it was announced that Governor Pillsbury would be a candidate for nomination a third time. There was no precedent for this proposition, and it was strongly opposed by many strong party men. Lieutenant Governor J. B. Wakefield and Gen. L. F. Hubbard were candidates for the nomination, and both had extensive support.

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The Dispatch, under my control, vigorously opposed the renomination of Governor Pillsbury, although he and many of his supporters were still stockholders in the paper. Considerable bitterness was engendered during the pre-convention canvass. Pillsbury was nominated by the convention, and although the Dispatch supported him loyally as the party candidate, and although he was elected by a comfortable majority, I personally incurred his lasting enmity. The ill feeling between us lasted for twelve years, when it was finally terminated through the intervention of our mutual friend, Ex-Governor Marshall.

Pillsbury was nominated by the convention, as stated; but the remainder of the opposition "slate," which our friends made up, was victorious in the convention, namely, for lieutenant governor, C. A. Gilman, secretary of state, F. Von Baumbach, and treasurer, Charles Kittelson. Mr. Gilman here specially displayed the qualities of political astuteness and steadfastness, which were often seen later.

As a result of experiences in this pre-convention controversy, the Dispatch thenceforward assumed an independent attitude within Republican party lines. It adopted for its own

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guidance a platform of civil service reform and the elimination of state and federal officeholders from active manipulation of party politics. We thus antedated by more than twenty-five years the current Roosevelt policy which now commands practically universal approval. In this course I was sustained by stockholders owning more than a majority in amount of the capital of the paper, although a numerical majority of the stockholders, comprising officeholders and adherents of what we called the "old machine," were arrayed against me.

1880.

The lines were again drawn early in 1880 between the two elements of the party. The Republicans of the state were, admittedly, overwhelmingly in favor of nominating James G. Blaine for President. The officeholders and the machine were in favor of U. S. Grant. As a means of taking the state away from Blaine, the device of carrying it for Senator William Windom of our state as a candidate was adopted. C. K. Davis was put forward in the Blaine interest for delegate at large to the Republican National Convention. A spirited campaign followed; Ramsey county was carried for Blaine and Davis, but the combined influence of the officeholders and of state pride resulted in the selection of a Windom delegation by the state convention.

The Republican National Convention met in Chicago and was one of the most notable in the history of American politics. The splendid oratory of Garfield, Conkling, and others, in their nominating speeches was in itself sufficient to signalize the assemblage. Its notable achievement was the abolition of the unit rule which resulted in the nomination of James A. Garfield. Minnesota's alleged candidate, Senator Windom, cut a sorry figure in the proceedings; he never received a vote outside of our delegation, and the phrase "Windom 10" became a matter of national ridicule. At Chicago, before the convention met, General McLaren of St. Paul, one of the enthusiastic Windom boomers, said to me: "I am astonished in talking to men from other states to find how few of them know anything about Senator Windom." I replied: "General, who are the two senators from Nebraska?" "I

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don't know," he said. "Neither do I," said I, "and that shows how local the reputation of a supposedly great man may be."

The Democrats nominated Gen. W. S. Hancock for President, and a campaign ensued which on national issues was quite tame in Minnesota, since there was no question as to how the vote of the state would stand.

In June, 1880, with the consent of my associates in the ownership of a majority of the Dispatch stock, I sold my interest to Ex-Governor W. R. Marshall and Gen. C. C. Andrews, who soon acquired the entire ownership. I thus retired for a short period from the active work of journalism. I engaged actively during the early autumn in the speaking campaign in the northern part of the state, for W. D. Washburn, the Republican nominee for Congress against Gen. H. H. Sibley, the Democratic candidate. Later, I went with Gen. J. B. Sanborn into the First district, the southern part of the state, where we made a thorough canvass for Mark H. Dunnell, the Republican candidate. 576 There was a triangular fight in this district and a close contest; W. G. Ward was an independent Republican candidate, and H. G. Wells was on the Democratic ticket. Dunnell was successful and continued his useful career in the House of Representatives.

1881.

When the Legislature of 1881 assembled, one of its first duties was to elect a successor to Senator S. J. R. McMillan. Ex-Senator Ramsey, then serving as Secretary of War in the cabinet of President Hayes, appeared as a candidate against McMillan, having the support of the Pioneer Press and many of the old political associates. Ex-Governor C. K. Davis also entered the lists, but as no preliminary organization in his favor had been attempted, he did not make a conspicuous showing. Senator McMillan was re-elected, and Davis' ambition remained ungratified for another six-year period.

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When President Garfield was inaugurated March 4th, he appointed Senator Windom Secretary of the Treasury. This created a vacancy in the senate which Governor Pillsbury filled by appointing Gen. A. J. Edgerton of Dodge county as senator.

In the summer of 1881 an active canvass began for the nomination for governor. I warmly espoused the cause of Gen. L. F. Hubbard, and was entrusted by him with the management of his campaign throughout the state. A systematic organization of his friends was effected in nearly every county, and there was from the beginning an almost uninterrupted series of favorable reports. Hon. A. R. McGill, insurance commissioner, announced his candidacy and accumulated a very creditable support in certain directions. To the astonishment of everybody the Pioneer Press, at a late period, announced the candidacy of Governor Pillsbury for a fourth term. A somewhat exciting canvass followed in several counties. The Pillsbury and McGill forces combined in Ramsey county, carried the county convention by a small margin, and secured the county delegation to the state convention. When the state convention met, Clark Thompson of Houston county also appeared as a candidate, but General Hubbard was nominated over all 577 by a handsome majority. A new State Central Committee was selected, whereof C. K. Davis was made chairman and myself secretary and treasurer.

One of the incidental results of this convention, which I always lamented, was the defeat of my friend Greenleaf Clark of St. Paul for justice of the Supreme Court, a position to which he had been appointed a few months before by the governor to fill a vacancy, a position which he was qualified to dignify and adorn, and to which his numerous friends desired to see him formally elected. But the committal of the Ramsey county delegation to the Pillsbury interest in the state convention, which interest was in a minority, neutralized their influence, and, as matter of practical politics, naturally involved the defeat of Judge Clark. It was a lifelong disappointment to him and he always seemed to blame the Hubbard element in the party, whereas in reality he only had his St. Paul friends, who identified his interests with those of Pillsbury, to thank for his discomfiture.

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At this convention, Gen. James H. Baker was nominated for railroad commissioner, under circumstances which vividly illustrate the fortuities of politics. General Baker had served as secretary of state, as colonel of the Tenth Minnesota regiment in the Civil War, and as United States commissioner of pensions; he was a popular and effective campaign orator, with a wide state acquaintance. He had come up to the convention from his farm in Blue Earth county to support Col. Clark W. Thompson for governor, and with no thought of office for himself. The night before the convention I was talking with General Baker at the hotel and incidentally remarked that Ex-Governor Marshall apparently had no opposition for renomination as railroad commissioner, an office which he had then held for eight years. The general remarked that he supposed this position came by appointment from the governor, as had formerly been the case. I replied that it was now elective, and would come before the convention.

Next day, General Baker in a remarkably eloquent speech presented the name of Colonel Thompson for governor. After Hubbard's nomination, Gen. Baker announced himself a candidate 37 578 for railroad commissioner. He had many personal friends among the delegates; his ringing speech had favorably impressed many others; Governor Marshall, anticipating no opposition, had made little or no effort in his own behalf, and General Baker was nominated. He was, of course, elected, and held this important position five years.

In the midst of the Hubbard campaign I purchased the St. Paul Dispatch from Ex-Governor Marshall, and on September 17, 1881, resumed control of the paper as its editor and sole proprietor.

In the fall of 1881, the Minnesota Supreme Court rendered a decision which opened the way for a settlement of the old, repudiated State Railroad bonds, and Governor Pillsbury at once called an extra session of the Legislature to act upon the question. Although I had come to the state long after this largely fraudulent indebtedness had been contracted, I had always favored any fair adjustment that would relieve our commonwealth of the stain attached to its repudiation. But when this extra session convened, I saw so much

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of the disgraceful methods employed to secure votes for the settlement proposed, heard so much of the shameless bargaining and sale going on, that I aligned the Dispatch with those who opposed the plan; demanded that the people be heard, and that there be, at least, enough delay to thwart the plans of those who expected and finally did reap rich harvests from the fields of corruption opened before them. But Governor Pillsbury wanted to signalize the close of his administration by wiping out the stigma, and helped to "jam" the measure through. Selah Chamberlain, the principal bondholder and popularly believed to be a party to the original fraud, secured his unearned millions. The outside credit of the state was restored and the incident was closed.

This extra session was, by law, required to elect a United States senator to fill Mr. Windom's unexpired term, vice Gen. A. J. Edgerton, holding the place ad interim by appointment. Windom had retired from the cabinet after Garfield's death; he now wanted to go back to the senate, and General Edgerton declined to contest the position with him. Some little opposition 579 was mustered, under the lead of C. A. Gilman, lieutenant governor, but Windom was elected. It was generally conceded that Senator Edgerton would have been successful had he consented to make the race.

1882.

The important political events of 1882 were the nomination and election of our increased Republican Congressional delegation, and preparations for the senatorial election to be held in January of the succeeding year.

Under the new apportionment Minnesota was entitled to five representatives in Congress instead of three, which number had been our allotment for ten years. The exciting contests were in the first and fifth districts. In the first district Mr. Dunnell, the incumbent, was defeated for the nomination by Milo White. Dunnell attributed his overthrow to Windom, a conviction which produced important consequences a little later.

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In the fifth district one of the liveliest contests in the political history of Minnesota ensued. C. F. Kindred of Brainerd, a wealthy and ambitious young aspirant, entered the field with the avowed purpose of spending money freely to secure the nomination. There were several other candidates, the most formidable being Knute Nelson of Alexandria. The district convention assembled at Detroit on the Northern Pacific railroad. As a representative of both the Dispatch and the State Central Committee, I attended this convention and witnessed its turbulent proceedings. There were many contesting delegations, and the indications of a split were numerous from the beginning, the only question being as to which side should gain the most points in favor of regularity. It was Kindred against the field, all the other candidates having combined in opposition to him. The history of that riotous convention has often been written; its scenes of disgraceful confusion cannot be exaggerated; it was for a considerable period nothing but a howling mob, and bloodshed was narrowly escaped. The Kindred forces held the convention hall, while their opponents withdrew in a body, proceeded to a tent which had been pitched in a vacant lot as a precautionary measure, and performed 580 their duties in a standing position but with much harmony and enthusiasm.

The convention in the hall unanimously nominated Kindred as the alleged Republican for Congress from the fifth district, and the convention in the tent unanimously performed the same distinguished service for Knute Nelson. Impartial observation on the ground thoroughly convinced me that Mr. Nelson had a decisive majority of the bona fide delegates elected to the convention, and I promptly decided to support him in the Dispatch. Governor Davis and many other friends favored Kindred. There were abundant financial inducements to newspapers which would advocate Kindred, and a campaign of great bitterness as well as of liberal financial disbursements on the Kindred side ensued. The Democrats nominated a candidate and hoped to elect him, owing to the Republican division. But Mr. Nelson was elected by a considerable plurality and thus began a career which has been followed by his election three times to Congress, twice to the governorship, and three times as United States senator.

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The issue of general interest throughout the state centered in the coming senatorial election. Mr. Windom only remained in the cabinet a few months, and when the Legislature met in extra session during the autumn of 1881 he was, as we have seen, chosen to fill his own unexpired term, General Edgerton having temporarily succeeded him. But a very serious opposition to Windom's re-election for a third term had now developed throughout the state. The Dispatch took strong ground in opposition, and the Republican press of the state was arrayed with almost entire unanimity against him. In addition to conducting the Dispatch actively along the anti-Windom line, it was my duty to superintend an organization in all the legislative districts to secure the nomination of state senators and representatives committed to our policy. We had no avowed candidate, but simply demanded the defeat of Windom and an open door for all competent Republicans. Mark H. Dunnell, the most tireless political worker I ever met, threw himself energetically into the anti-Windom contest, giving it his undivided attention for several months. As a result of the 581 efforts thus put forth we were fully convinced, when we scanned the names of Republicans elected to the Legislature in November, that Mr. Windom would not return to his long occupied seat in Washington.

One of the incidents of this lively contest was my arrest for criminal libel, the only instance of a suit civil or criminal being brought against me during my strenuous journalistic career. An active and zealous Federal official, an inspector of the post office department by grace of Mr. Windom, was alleged to be very busy looking after the senator's interests, to the neglect of his official duties. I took occasion to criticise his conduct in the paper, applying to the derelict official some semi-humorous epithets, without a particle of malicious feeling, for I had no personal acquaintance with the gentleman. Feeling aggrieved, or incited thereto by some of Mr. Windom's Winona friends, the inspector went to that city and swore out a warrant for my arrest, charging me with publishing language regarding him which was calculated to humiliate and degrade him in the eyes of the public. The Winona county sheriff served his warrant on me in St. Paul; I went before Judge W. T. Burr of our municipal court, as permitted by statute, and gave bonds to the amount of \$500 for my

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appearance in court at Winona, in case an indictment should be found. When the court met, the election had passed, the excitement had subsided, and the grand jury saw fit to ignore the case; hence I had no further trouble therewith. It is interesting to note that the post office inspector alluded to is still in the public service after a long and highly creditable career, having been entrusted by his official superiors with many important functions far beyond the grade to which he has attained.

1883.

The winter of 1883 was signalized by the prolonged and acidulated contest in the Legislature over the election of a successor to Senator Windom. Those who received the larger number of votes in opposition were ex-Congressman M. H. Dunnell, Ex-Governor Davis and Governor Hubbard, though scattering votes were cast for many others.

The popular sentiment among Republicans against Windom was based on the fact that he had measurably withdrawn himself from interest in and sympathy with state politics, during his long absence in Washington, as well as the fact that he was believed to be largely in the hands of the same coterie of officeholders, contractors, etc., which had assumed to control the party since its organization. This feeling of hostility seemed to justify his opponents in resorting to radical measures for his defeat. It was consequently decided that they would not participate in a Republican senatorial caucus, which would probably be under machine influences.

Efforts were therefore directed toward securing the concert of all anti-Windom members of the Legislature to abstain from the caucus. Numerous consultations were held by the anti-Windom leaders, Mr. Dunnell, Generals Sanborn and Averill, C. A. Gilman, C. K. Davis, and others, with legislators, and finally a conference was called one evening at the law office of General Sanborn to which all the anti-Windom members of the Legislature were invited. The attendance was encouragingly large, and the reports from reliable absentees indicated that the movement to defeat a binding senatorial caucus would be successful.

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After attending that conference I went to the Merchants' Hotel, where I met Hon. D. M. Sabin of Stillwater, a member of the Legislature prominent in the Windom councils, who had just come from a meeting of Mr. Windom's friends. I called Mr. Sabin aside, told him that Windom was doomed to defeat, and said that I hoped influential Republicans of both factions would fix their minds on a generally acceptable candidate who could be elected and be a credit to the state. Without admitting my deductions, Mr. Sabin inquired whom I had in view. I told him that in my opinion Governor Hubbard, although he was not in the field and evidently did not desire the office, could get more votes in the Legislature than any other man now mentioned. Besides his official prestige and his acknowledged merits, he would have the support of many friends of Lieutenant Governor Gilman, who would succeed to the governorship. I also spoke of several other available names as alternatives. To each of these suggestions Mr. Sabin made some mild objection, but did not indicate any preference of his own. This interview is significant from the fact that Mr. Sabin himself was ultimately elected senator as the outcome of the movement. It was afterward charged by Windom's friends that Sabin had been in the anti-Windom "conspiracy" from the beginning, and was therefore treacherous to his chief. I believe that I was cognizant of every important move throughout the state for the defeat of Windom, and I did not know of a single place where Mr. Sabin's influence was thrown in our favor. We always classed him as Windom man and I thoroughly believe today that down to the moment when I told him the outcome of our conference, he was faithful to Windom and expected to see him elected.

The senatorial caucus, as we had planned and predicted, was a failure. Of 110 Republicans in the Legislature, only 62 went into the caucus. This was not a majority of the Legislature and the caucus could not make a nomination that would be binding on those Republicans who did not participate. The contest was thus thrown into the open Legislature where after balloting many days, for numerous candidates, the anti-Windom Republicans mostly concentrated their votes on Mr. Sabin, who then by preconcerted arrangement received enough Democratic votes to secure his election.

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Mr. Windom, who had come from Washington late in the day to look after his interests, which had been personally neglected through his supreme self-confidence, left St. Paul the moment Sabin was elected, without even thanking the two score or more devoted friends who stood by him to the last. Mr. Windom thus practically disappeared from Minnesota politics, only appearing here afterward to feed his revenge in trying to defeat the aspirations of some of those who had contributed to his downfall.

At the Republican state convention of 1883, Governor L. F. Hubbard was re-nominated without opposition. Meantime a constitutional amendment providing for biennial elections and sessions of the Legislature had been adopted, by means of which his second term was extended to three years. Governor Hubbard thus served five years in the executive chair, with a success which demonstrated in civil life the same high qualities 584 that had won for him honor and promotion as an officer in the civil war. It is a noteworthy circumstance that at the outbreak of the Spanish American war in 1898, thirty-three years after the close of his previous military service, have again tendered his sword to the Government, was appointed a brigadier general by President McKinley, and commanded a division of troops of the new generation of patriotic Americans.

Early in 1883 I was appointed inspector of illuminating oils by Governor Hubbard. The emoluments of the office were not so large at that period as they afterward became, but the duties were important and I held the position during the remainder of the official term.

At about this period there began to appear in state conventions and in the Legislature a new generation of militant Republicans who affiliated, as a rule, with the progressive wing of the party, and soon gave evidence of the qualities which, in the next decade, were to lift them high in the councils of the state and the nation. As examples it will suffice to mention Moses E. Clapp, J. A. Tawney, John Lind, R. G. Evans, Frank A. Day, H. Steenerson, F. C. Stevens, G. S. Ives, Tams Bixby, Frank M. Eddy, F. B. Kellogg, and Joel P. Heatwole.

1884.

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In May, 1884, there arose in the state, and especially in Ramsey county, a peculiar contest over the delegation to the Republican National Convention. Minnesota was, as always, for James G. Blaine, and C. K. Davis was universally recognized as an exponent of Mr. Blaine's candidacy in this state. Meantime Senator D. M. Sabin had been made chairman of the Republican National Committee, a position of honor and influence and a credit to our state. Mr. Sabin expressed a desire to be elected one of the delegates at large to the National convention, and I believed with others that it was due him as a proof of the confidence and endorsement of his constituents. But Governor Davis joined with Mr. Wheelock, Mr. Driscoll, W. R. Merriam, and some other St. Paul Republicans, in a movement to carry Ramsey county against Sabin. I, here, for a second time, parted company temporarily with Governor Davis. I joined with General Sanborn, General McLaren, W. 585 B. Dean, Mark D. Flower and others, in carrying the county for Sabin, as against Davis, Merriam, and their following. We elected a delegation to the state convention which was instructed to support Sabin for delegate at large, but I personally reserved the right to vote also for Davis as another delegate, believing that there was room in this state and on the delegation for both these distinguished men. After the county convention I had a stormy interview with Governor Davis, who felt crushed and humiliated by the outcome. I consoled him by quoting Lincoln's telegram to Richard Yates: "Possess thou thy soul in patience; stand by, and see the salvation of the Lord."

When the delegates to the Republican state convention assembled in St. Paul, it was manifest that the sentiment in favor of Blaine was duly represented, and that the long time favorite of the outside counties, C. K. Davis, was their choice for one of the delegates. In the forenoon before the convention met, a Blaine caucus was called at the Merchants' Hotel, in which I, alone of the Ramsey county delegation, participated. It was here decided to present Z. B. Clarke of Swift county as our candidate for chairman of the state convention, and C. K. Davis as one of the delegates at large to Chicago. When a motion was made to support D. M. Sabin as another delegate, Hon. Frank A. Day of Martin county, later private secretary to Governor Johnson but then an ardent Blaine

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Republican, moved to send a committee to senator Sabin and secure his pledge to vote for Blaine. The motion was about to be carried, when I vigorously protested against submitting our senator to this inquiry. I expressed my belief that he would vote for Blaine as the unquestioned choice of his state, and argued that whether he did or not we could afford to show our confidence in him and our appreciation of the honor which had been conferred on Minnesota by his exaltation to the leadership of the party in the nation. My appeal was successful, and Mr. Sabin was endorsed without the exaction of a pledge. The event proved that I was wrong in my supposition, Mr. Sabin having previously pledged himself to vote for President Arthur and feeling obliged to carry out that pledge,—but it 586 fortunately made no difference in the result; Blaine was nominated at Chicago, but was defeated by Grover Cleveland.

When the state convention assembled, Z. B. Clarke was proposed for chairman by the Blaine side and Gen. John B. Sanborn by the opposition. My vote was the only one cast for Clarke from the three leading counties of the state, Ramsey, Hennepin, and Winona. Mr. Clarke was elected chairman by a small majority, and I was immediately made secretary of the convention without opposition. Mr. Clarke, on assuming the chair, made a very brief address which for several years was quoted with amused approval throughout the state. He said: "This honor is unexpected, but I promise you to discharge my duties as your presiding officer honestly and impartially—in the interest of James G. Blaine." He did.

The further proceedings of the convention were without special incident. My plan of sending both Davis and Sabin to the National convention was now satisfactory to all parties, and two other delegates at large were selected. Davis and Sabin sat fraternally in the great Chicago convention; Sabin presided over its preliminary organization, and Davis made a memorably brilliant address, proposing the nomination of Mr. Blaine.

At the conclusion of our state convention I was named as the member of the state central committee from the state at large, afterward being elected chairman thereof. From my affiliation with the majority I was able to secure the selection of Mark D. Flower as district

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member of the state committee and W. B. Dean as presidential elector, although both of them, as delegates from Ramsey county, had voted against the organization. General Flower, being the incumbent of a Federal office, soon resigned from the committee; Major John Espy of St. Paul was chosen in his place and elected secretary. Major Espy and myself conducted the vigorous campaign for Blaine which ensued, and which, as before stated, resulted in a majority of 43,000 for our candidate with the expenditure of only \$850.

The next important political event of the year 1884 with which I was connected was the contest for Republican nomination 587 of Congressman in this district. Hon. Loren Fletcher of Minneapolis, long an aspirant, was now in the field with the backing of his own county and several others. Albert Scheffer of St. Paul was also a candidate; Ramsey county supported him, and I was one of the delegates to the district convention. There was a contested delegation from Washington county, and the forces were so nearly equal that this delegation would decide the result. On the question of the admission of delegates from Washington county the convention was so evenly divided that one delegate, H. F. Barker of Isanti county, had the casting vote. Mr. Barker was opposed to both Fletcher and Scheffer, but expressed a willingness to join the Scheffer delegates in nominating Hon. J. B. Gilfillan of Minneapolis. As the only other alternative seemed to be a split in the convention, two candidates, and a Republican defeat in the district, Mr. Scheffer and his friends consented to the arrangement. Mr. Barker came into our camp; Washington county was neutralized, and Mr. Gilfillan was nominated. Mr. Fletcher was greatly disappointed, but eight years later, when Hennepin county became a district of itself, he was elected to the coveted position and served an aggregate of twelve years in Washington, greatly to the benefit of his admiring constituents.

1885.

Under the operation of the Constitutional amendment providing for biennial sessions, the year 1885 was the first year in the history of the state when no election was held. There

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was consequently a rest from political conflict, the forerunner of similar grateful periods of political repose which have since been enjoyed on alternate years.

In the spring of 1885, finding my health seriously threatened by the laborious duties of editor, proprietor, and business manager of the Daily Dispatch, and having a satisfactory offer from Mr. George K. Shaw of Minneapolis, I sold the property to him and retired from daily newspaper work. One year later Mr. Shaw sold the paper to his associated, Mr. George Thompson, who has retained the ownership until this time and has built up the magnificent institution to which Minnesotans point with pride, the St. Paul Dispatch of today.

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After passing through a period of serious illness resulting from overwork, I occupied such leisure time as I could spare from the development of suburban property to the formation of an organization throughout the state for the election of C. K. Davis to the United States senate by the legislature of 1887. The sentiment was overwhelmingly in his favor, the old guard of Republican editors was everywhere alert and active; the accession of Cleveland to the presidency had broken down the oligarchy of officeholders which had been the nucleus of the strength of both Windom and McMillan; in a word, the coast was clear and it only needed concert of action to insure success.

1886.

The year 1886 was what is denominated an "off year" in politics. The Republican party suffered accordingly. Three of the five Congressional districts in the state elected Democratic representatives, Thomas Wilson, John L. Macdonald, and Edmund Rice,—the two Republicans elected being John Lind and Knute Nelson.

At the Republican state convention, Hon. A. R. McGill was nominated for governor, the opposing candidates being C. A. Gilman and Albert Scheffer. My name was presented to the convention for lieutenant governor, and I received over 100 votes, notwithstanding the

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fact that the previous nomination of Mr. McGill, also a resident of St. Paul, precluded any possibility of my success.

Mr. Windom appeared in this convention as a delegate from Winona county for the avowed purpose of helping his friends and punishing his enemies. Notwithstanding the fact of his presence, his special protégé, Samuel H. Nichols, was defeated for clerk of the Supreme Court, and office which he had held for eleven years. Mr. Windom was subsequently appointed Secretary of the Treasury by President Harrison, and died in office. He was credited to Minnesota notwithstanding the fact that he had some years before become a permanent resident of New York city. His interference in Minnesota appointments while a member of Harrison's cabinet was the source of much friction between himself and Senator Davis, who naturally resented it.

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The systematic canvass for members of the Legislature friendly to the election of C. K. Davis as United States senator was continued this year, and after the election in November it was easy to predict from the complexion of the returns that victory was assured.

1887.

The legislature of 1887 passed a bill creating the Board of Trustees of the State Soldiers' Home, and Governor McGill appointed me a member thereof. I was elected president of the Board when it organized, and served in that position, without salary or perquisite, for twelve years. The labors of the Board, including the responsibility of building and administering the Home, as well as the disbursement of the outside relief fund, were very exacting, and an undue share of them naturally devolved on the president. But there were pleasant incidents and associations connected with the service that to some extent recompensed the effort.

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When the legislature assembled in January, 1887, Senator McMillan came home from Washington, announced his candidacy for a third term, and energetically sought support. It was soon revealed, however, even to him, that C. K. Davis was the predestined Republican nominee. Senator McMillan gracefully withdrew; Davis was nominated at an open Republican caucus with substantial unanimity, and was elected by the Legislature with the enthusiastic support of a united party.

This result was the fruition of twelve years' effort on the part of the annually augmenting fraternity of Minnesota Republicans with whom I had been closely identified. We had now placed our favorite in the arena where we believed his splendid natural gifts and his wide range of acquirements would lead to a career of conspicuous usefulness to his state and his country.

This ended, in an aureole of success, the first twenty years of my experiences of and participation in the political affairs of this state. My activities were thenceforward less pronounced, although I did not cease my interest, nor abstain from work. The later field was more circumscribed. I had served my turn on state committees, and I no longer controlled 590 a daily newspaper. The chronicles of the second twenty years will therefore permit a briefer and less detailed treatment.

1888–1907.

At the Republican state convention of 1888, Governor A. R. McGill was a candidate for renomination. He was entitled to this endorsement, both by uniform party precedent and by the excellence of his administration. But W. R. Merriam, an ambitious young banker of St. Paul, could not restrain his impatience for the coveted prize, and appeared as a candidate. This led Albert Scheffer, also of St. Paul, to enter the field, and a contest of great animation ensued. I favored Governor McGill, and worked earnestly for his success. Scheffer and Merriam fought desperately for Ramsey county, and Scheffer won. With his consent three avowed McGill men, including myself, were placed on the Ramsey

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county delegation to the state convention. I was made one of the McGill managers, and was selected to deliver the nominating speech. Mutual friends had arranged that Scheffer should withdraw in favor of McGill, if the latter developed the greater strength; but Scheffer, hoping to gain, failed to withdraw in time to effect a winning combination, and Merriam was nominated. The result caused some political and personal bitterness that was never sweetened. One humorous episode relieved some of the somber features. After the final vote, a friend asked Scheffer how many delegates he had to buy. "Ah," said he, "from the rapidity with which my vote shrank, I fear I'll be accused of selling delegates."

In the legislature of 1889, Senator D. M. Sabin was a candidate for re-election, with Hon. W. D. Washburn as his opponent. Although on the friendliest terms personally and politically with Sabin, I had incurred no obligation to him, and my deliberate preference was now for Washburn. I therefore did all in my power to aid him. Washburn was elected, and during the single term to which his service in the Senate was limited, he made, as was to be expected from his high character and long public experience, an unblemished record.

The year 1890 was another decidedly "off year" for Minnesota Republicans, due to the reaction against the McKinley 591 tariff bill, just enacted and not yet tested. W. R. Merriam was re-elected governor by a plurality of 2,200 over Judge Thomas Wilson, the Democratic nominee. But as the "Alliance" candidate, S. M. Owen received 58,500 votes, and the Prohibition candidate over 8,000, Mr. Merriam lacked nearly 65,000 votes of a majority. Worse than that, four of the five Republican candidates for Congress were defeated, the only successful nominee being John Lind in the second district, who turned Democrat shortly afterward. A notable event of this year was the election of Kittel Halvorson, Farmers Alliance candidate for Congress, in the fifth district. A. J. Whiteman, of Duluth, was the Democratic nominee, and S. G. Comstock, the then incumbent, the Republican. Mr. Whiteman induced Halvorson, a farmer in Stearns county, to run on the Alliance ticket, with the expectation of reducing the Republican vote, Whiteman paying all Halvorson's campaign expenses. To the astonishment of everybody, especially Whiteman,

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Halvorson was elected. He served one term in Congress; lived, it is said, on his "mileage;" saved the \$10,000 salary to improve and enlarge his farm, and retired on his laurels. Whiteman developed into a criminal of the deepest dye, and is now an inmate of the New York penitentiary.

In February, 1892, I was appointed postmaster of St. Paul by President Harrison, on the recommendation of Senator Davis, and held office until November 1, 1896, or eight months beyond the allotted four years' term, although after the first year I served under the second Democratic administration of Grover Cleveland. After Cleveland came in, some hostile Democrats sought to secure my removal on the ground of "offensive partisanship," but failed. They were told that removals would only be made on a defective official record, and as I was permitted to remain in office eight months after my time expired, it is fair to assume that the record was satisfactory. I administered the civil service law as to the 200 employees of the post office in good faith, and made no attempt to use them for partisan politics. But I did not surrender my political convictions, nor cease working for my party in all proper ways. I made speeches in every campaign, as usual, and participated in 592 Republican conferences and conventions, unmolested. Whatever may be said adverse to President Cleveland, he was certainly sincere and consistent in his civil service policy.

In 1893 Senator Davis was a candidate before the legislature for re-election. The state convention of 1892 had unanimously endorsed him as the party candidate and in most of the counties Republican senators and representatives had been instructed to support him. The legislature of 1891 had been controlled by a combination of Democrats and Populists; hence the efforts of Senator Davis' friends were principally directed to securing a Republican majority, trusting to these endorsements and instructions, undoubtedly backed by public sentiment, to ensure his election. The majority, on joint ballot, was about twelve, but when the legislature assembled it developed that a secret campaign of debauchery and corruption had been inaugurated to defeat Davis, with the hope of electing an unavowed, but well recognized Republican aspirant in his stead. No more

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brazen, defiant, and demoralizing movement was ever inaugurated in any state. Votes were shamelessly trafficked in, and so recklessly that the price paid in many instances was well known, in advance, to the Senator's supporters, who had a detective force systematically at work and kept advised of every movement. Enough Republican votes were bought and actually paid for to prevent a majority for Davis on the first joint ballot, but several of the bribed members weakened at the last moment and Davis received precisely enough votes to elect him, not one to spare. I was cognizant of all the details of the contest; held at one time, for possible use as evidence in criminal prosecutions, a considerable sum of the corruption fund paid to one of the members; and I yet retain interesting correspondence and memoranda, which, for the credit of the state, it were better to consign to oblivion. The miserable conspiracy failed; Senator Davis was re-elected, and most of the persons who betrayed him were effectually reckoned with by their indignant constituents.

Early in 1896 a very strong sentiment was manifested in certain portions of the country in favor of the selection of Senator C. K. Davis as the Republican candidate for President. 593 His eloquent speeches in the Senate on several important questions had made him a national reputation, and his ringing telegram to the Duluth labor leaders in 1894 had evinced the possession of qualities too rare in public men. Not only did hundreds of newspapers in many states express favorable opinions of his candidacy, but volunteer offers of support were received from influential Republicans in various sections. In addition, a considerable number of his colleagues in the Senate and House, who were powerful political factors in their respective states, were ready to assist if there was any hope of success. A number of Senator Davis' friends, including myself, formed a correspondence bureau in St. Paul which brought encouraging news from all quarters. But, a little later, the popular sentiment for McKinley became so strong that it was evident no other aspirant could make headway against it. Senator Davis promptly acquiesced in the proposition to give our state delegation to McKinley, who had no more effective

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champion in the campaign, or more loyal, trusted counsellor during the trying crises of his administration.

At the Republican state convention of 1896, Gov. David M. Clough, who had succeeded to the seat of Gov. Knute Nelson when the latter was chosen United States senator to succeed Washburn a year previously, was a candidate for the nomination for governor. Hon. Moses E. Clapp of St. Paul was proposed in opposition to Mr. Clough and commanded my earnest support, as a matter of personal and political preference. But he came late into the field, and although we made a vigorous and measurably successful fight in Ramsey county Governor Clough was victorious.

In the campaign of 1896, although still postmaster of St. Paul under a Democratic administration, I spoke many times in various counties for the Republican ticket,—as, indeed, I have in every national and most of the intermediate contests, since 1864.

In May, 1897, on the special recommendation of Senator Davis, approved by Senator Nelson and the entire Minnesota delegation in Congress, I was appointed Auditor for the Post Office Department in Washington. The bureau over which the 38 594 Auditor presides is attached to the Treasury Department, although it is located in the Post Office Department building, and it is exclusively engaged in adjusting and recording the accounts of that great governmental institution, which employs more men and handles more money than all other branches of the government combined. The Auditor's office has over 700 employees; it settles and records, every working day in the year, 3,000 accounts of postmasters, contractors and others, involving about \$8,000,000 daily, or two and a half billions of dollars a year. The business is rapidly increasing, and the strain on the faithful clerks and the experienced chiefs of division, as well as on the head of the office, is tremendous. I held the position until January, 1904, six years and eight months,—a longer period than any other incumbent since its creation in 1836.

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During my stay in Washington, I kept advised, through the newspapers, through correspondence, and through frequent visits to the state, of the general currents of Minnesota politics, although I necessarily lost touch, to a considerable degree, with the constantly changing personnel of the party.

In 1899, Senator Davis was re-elected without opposition, thus securing the then unprecedented honor (since worthily conferred on Senator Nelson) of a third term in the Senate from this state. During the early months of 1898 there had been some mutterings of coming hostility to him, which led his friends to take some precautionary steps in his behalf. But the events of the Spanish-American war, which brought our Senator into such conspicuous eminence, which brought into exercise on the highest plane of statesmanship his commanding abilities and the special attainments he had, for years, been cultivating, which made him the leader of the Senate as well as the adviser of the President in international questions, and, in great emergencies, the actual arbiter of national destiny,—all this so augmented the pride of his constituents as to dwarf to insignificance and banish from sight every trace of the meditated antagonism.

In 1900 President McKinley was renominated, with Theodore Roosevelt as his running mate; and Bryan, as in 1896, was 595 his Democratic opponent. In September I attended the great Hamilton Club banquet in Chicago, where Senator Davis ably “struck the keynote” of the national campaign, making, as it eventuated, his last important address, and pathetically evincing, could we have realized it, the fatal exhaustion of his physical powers. I came to Minnesota in October and devoted some weeks to campaigning, Senator Davis was then seriously ill at his home in St. Paul, and on election day, November 6th, before returning to Washington, I bade him what proved to be a final farewell. November 29th I came back to St. Paul and attended his funeral; among the thousands of sorrowing citizens of Minnesota who paid their tributes of honor as he lay in state at the Capitol, I am sure there was no more sincere mourner than myself.

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This paper has sufficiently verified its statement that the central figure of a large portion of the political activity in which I have indulged during my forty years residence in Minnesota was Cushman K. Davis. I think no man who supported him at any time during his career ever felt obliged to apologize for that support. If there has been a series of clean political combats in the history of any state, it was the Davis side of the numerous battles fought by his friends in his interest. When it was all over and I was privileged to speak some words of appreciation at the unveiling of his monument at Arlington, Va., I could truthfully place on record for his honor and that of our magnificent commonwealth this eulogium:

Honored for thirty years with his unreserved confidence, advised as to the minutest details of his political contests, I here affirm with all the solemnity these surroundings and this event can lend, that no unworthy suggestion, no dishonorable proposition, no device for improper influence, no hint at undue advantage, ever came from him, even in the most crucial stress of dangerous and doubtful struggles. In none of his campaigns was an office promised or an unclean dollar expended by him or for him, although in many of them he was confronted by venal methods employed by unscrupulous rivals. Let others dwell on the gifts and graces they discern,—this is my acme of encomium for the politician and the man.

In May, 1903, having served six years as Auditor at Washington, having found my health seriously impaired by the summer climate, and having more lucrative business opportunities offered, I tendered my resignation through the Secretary of the Treasury to the President. An investigation of the Post Office Department being then just inaugurated, I was asked to remain in office and assist therein. The inquiry yielded important results and lasted until October, when on its conclusion I again resigned. My resignation was accepted to take effect on the appointment of my successor, which was not made for more than three months. Finally on January 22, 1904, I turned over the bureau to the new appointee, my old friend, Hon. Joseph J. McCardy, of St. Paul. The long tenure, nearly seven years, of this the most important position I have held, marks the

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culmination of my experiences in political life. The Auditorship is a quasi-judicial position. There are six Auditors, whereof the Auditor for the Post Office Department supervises more employees and handles more business than the five others united. The direct official head of the accounting system, the appellate officer for all the Auditors, is the Comptroller of the Treasury. During all my service in Washington, Hon. R. J. Tracewell was Comptroller, and he still retains that position. When I retired from office, Mr. Tracewell wrote this testimonial, which I am possibly justified in quoting as a political valedictory:

“It was with the most profound regret that I learned several months since that you had tendered your resignation to take effect upon the appointment and qualification of a successor.

“If the President had known, as I know, the difficulties with which you have been surrounded during your term of office, and the fidelity and integrity with which you have performed the many arduous duties thereof, I feel confident that it would only have been for a consideration of your health that he would have consented to your resignation. Good Auditors for the Post Office Department are not made, but must be born. Even though one could be made, the process would be long, and in the making public interests would necessarily suffer more or less.

“I shall always recall with pleasure your intelligent zeal for the institution and carrying out of real reforms in your office, and the cheerful assistance you have always given me in any matter connected therewith. There is no officer in the Government service who is possessed of more information as to your true worth to the Government, nor one who will realize the loss of its being deprived of your services more keenly than myself.”

In 1904 two of my friends and co-workers in the lively political battles of twenty years before, Judge L. W. Collins 597 and Hon. R. C. Dunn, were rival aspirants for the Republican nomination for governor of Minnesota. I preferred Judge Collins, and supported him at the primaries. But Mr. Dunn received the nomination, and knowing, from

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of old, his sterling integrity and many manly qualities, I earnestly advocated his election on the platform and with the pen. It was a cause of keen regret to me that Mr. Dunn was defeated, even by so worthy a Democrat as Governor Johnson, not only on account of his personal disappointment but of the far-reaching disastrous consequences to the Republican party of this state.

All my activities of forty years in Minnesota politics have been with and for the Republican party. During the greater portion of this period, politics has been incidental, virtually a recreation, not interfering with my business occupations. I have not always agreed in every detail with the avowed policies of the party, but upon the whole its principles have seemed to me best calculated to promote the honor and prosperity of the state and the nation. Usually its candidates have been acceptable. The nominees have not in every instance been my first choice, but in most instances have commanded my adhesion.

I actively supported Marshall, Davis, Hubbard, McGill, Nelson, and Van Sant, for governor, also Averill, Stewart, Washburn, Dunnell, Strait, Nelson, Wakefield, Stevens, and others, for Congress, every time they were candidates for these offices, and never had occasion to regret that support. I supported Ramsey for one term in the Senate, Windom for two terms in the Senate, Sabin for one term in the Senate, and Pillsbury for two terms as governor, afterward opposing each of them for re-election, not as a rule from any special hostility to them personally or politically, but because of a marked preference for candidates who then stood in opposition. A few men who have been candidates for governor or Congress on the Republican ticket during the past forty years, I found myself unable to support, either for the nomination or for election; they were usually elected, however, but nothing in their official careers ever caused me to regret my opposition.

On the whole, my political experiences have led me to form a higher estimate of the personal integrity of party leaders than the general public seems to entertain. I believe that the average legislator is as honest as the average business man; that the business of the state and national governments is, in the main, well conducted, and that the men

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whom the people of this state have delighted to honor have been, with few exceptions, entirely worthy of their confidence. I have personally known every territorial and state governor of Minnesota except two, every senator and representative in Congress, and nearly all the unsuccessful candidates for all these positions. I am satisfied that, with few exceptions, the political victories achieved have been honestly won, and that, in most cases, the alleged corrupt use of money in Minnesota politics has been greatly exaggerated.

In the aggregate, the public men of the formative decades of the State have been able, far-sighted, and faithful to their trust. The magnificent result of their labors testifies to their wisdom and assiduity. If the generations which succeed them show equal capacity and devotion, we may be assured that the golden promise of the day in which we live will be amply fulfilled by the prosperity and happiness of the coming years.